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The Last Chronicle of Barset

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

With Illustrations by G. H. Thomas

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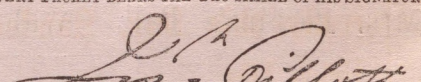

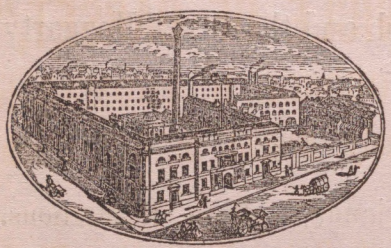

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CHAPTER XLII.

MR. TOOGOOD TRAVELS PROFESSIONALLY.

MR. TOOGOOD paid another visit to Barsetshire, in order that he might get a little further information which he thought would be necessary before despatching his nephew upon the traces of Dean Arabin and his wife. He went down to Barchester after his work was over by an evening train, and put himself up at "The Dragon of Wantly," intending to have the whole of the next day for his work. Mr. Walker had asked him to come and take a return pot-luck dinner with Mrs. Walker at Silverbridge; and this he had said that he would do. After having "rummaged about for tidings" in Barchester, as he called it, he would take the train for Silverbridge, and would get back to town in time for business on the third day. "One day won't be much, you know," he said to his partner, as he made half an apology for absenting himself on business which was not to be in any degree remunerative. "That sort of thing is very well when one does it without any expense," said Crump. "So it is," said Toogood; "and the expense won't make it any worse." He had made up his mind, and it was not probable that anything Mr. Crump might say would deter him.

He saw John Eames before he started. "You'll be ready this day week, will you?" John Eames promised that he would. "It will cost you some forty pounds, I should say. By George,—if you have to go on to Jerusalem, it will cost you more." In answer to this, Johnny pleaded that it would be as good as any other tour to him. He would see the world. "I'll tell you what," said Toogood; "I'll pay half. Only you mustn't tell Crump. And it will be quite as well

not to tell Maria." But Johnny would hear nothing of this scheme. He would pay the entire cost of his own journey. He had lots of money, he said, and would like nothing better. "Then I'll run down," said Toogood, and "rummage up what tidings I can. As for writing to the dean, what's the good of writing to a man when you don't know where he is? Business letters always lie at hotels for two months, and then come back with double postage. From all I can hear, you'll stumble on her before you find him. If we do nothing else but bring him back, it will be a great thing to have the support of such a friend in the court. A Barchester jury won't like to find a man guilty who is hand-and-glove with the dean."

Mr. Toogood reached the "Dragon" about eleven o'clock, and allowed the boots to give him a pair of slippers and a candlestick. But he would not go to bed just at that moment. He would go into the coffee-room first, and have a glass of hot brandy-and-water. So the hot brandy-and-water was brought to him, and a cigar, and as he smoked and drank he conversed with the waiter. The man was a waiter of the ancient class, a gray-haired waiter, with seedy clothes, and a dirty towel under his arm; not a dapper waiter, with black shiny hair, and dressed like a guest for a dinner-party. There are two distinct classes of waiters, and as far as I have been able to perceive, the special status of the waiter in question cannot be decided by observation of the class of waiter to which he belongs. In such a town as Barchester you may find the old waiter with the dirty towel in the head inn, or in the second-class inn, and so you may the dapper waiter. Or you may find both in each, and not know which is senior waiter and which junior waiter. But for service I always prefer the old waiter with the dirty towel, and I find it more easy to satisfy him in the matter of sixpences when my relations with the inn come to an end.

"Have you been here long, John?" said Mr. Toogood.

"A goodish many years, sir."

"So I thought, by the look of you. One can see that you belong in a way to the place. You do a good deal of business here, I suppose, at this time of the year?"

"Well, sir, pretty fair. The house ain't what it used to be, sir."

"Times are bad at Barchester,—are they?"

"I don't know much about the times. It's the people is worse than the times, I think. They used to like to have a little bit of dinner now and again at a hotel;—and a drop of something to drink after it."

"And don't they like it now?"

"I think they like it well enough, but they don't do it. I suppose it's their wives as don't let 'em come out and enjoy theirselves. There used to be the Goose and Glee club;—that was once a month. They've gone and clean done away with themselves,—that club has. There's old Bumpter in the High Street,—he's the last of the old Geese. They died off, you see, and when Mr. Biddle died they wouldn't choose another president. A club for having dinner, sir, ain't nothing without a president."

"I suppose not."

"And there's the Freemasons. They must meet, you know, sir, in course, because of the dooties. But if you'll believe me, sir, they don't so much as wet their whistles. They don't indeed. It always used to be a supper, and that was once a month. Now they pays a rent for the use of the room! Who is to get a living out of that, sir?—not in the way of a waiter, that is."

"If that's the way things are going on I suppose the servants leave their places pretty often?"

"I don't know about that, sir. A man may do a deal worse than 'The Dragon of Wantly.' Them as goes away to better themselves, often worses themselves, as I call it. I've seen a good deal of that."

"And you stick to the old shop?"

"Yes, sir; I've been here fifteen year, I think it is. There's a many goes away, as doesn't go out of their own heads, you know, sir."

"They get the sack, you mean?"

"There's words between them and master,—or more likely, missus. That's where it is. Servants is so foolish. I often tell 'em how wrong folks are to say that soft words butter no parsnips, and hard words break no bones."

"I think you've lost some of the old hands here since this time last year, John?"

"You knows the house then, sir?"

"Well;—I've been here before."

"There was four of them went, I think it's just about twelve months back, sir."

"There was a man in the yard I used to know, and last time I was down here, I found that he was gone."

"There was one of 'em out of the yard, and two out of the house. Master and them had got to very high words. There was poor Scuttle, who had been post-boy at 'The Compasses' before he came here."

"He went away to New Zealand, didn't he?"

"B'leve he did, sir; or to some foreign parts. And Anne, as was under-chambermaid here; she went with him, fool as she was. They

got theirselves married and went off, and he was well nigh as old as me. But seems he'd saved a little money, and that goes a long way with any girl."

"Was he the man who drove Mr. Soames that day the cheque was lost?" Mr. Toogood asked this question perhaps a little too abruptly. At any rate he obtained no answer to it. The waiter said he knew nothing about Mr. Soames, or the cheque, and the lawyer suspecting that the waiter was suspecting him, finished his brandy-and-water and went to bed.

Early on the following morning he observed that he was specially regarded by a shabby-looking man, dressed in black, but in a black suit that was very old, with a red nose, whom he had seen in the hotel on the preceding day; and he learned that this man was a cousin of the landlord, —one Dan Stringer,—who acted as a clerk in the hotel bar. He took an opportunity also of saying a word to Mr. Stringer the landlord,— whom he found to be a somewhat forlorn and gouty individual, seated on cushions in a little parlour behind the bar. After breakfast he went out, and having twice walked round the Cathedral close and inspected the front of the palace and looked up at the windows of the prebendaries' houses, he knocked at the door of the deanery. The dean and Mrs. Arabin were on the Continent, he was told. Then he asked for Mr. Harding, having learned that Mr. Harding was Mrs. Arabin's father, and that he lived at the deanery. Mr. Harding was at home, but was not very well, the servant said. Mr. Toogood, however, persevered, sending up his card, and saying that he wished to have a few minutes' conversation with Mr. Harding on very particular business. He wrote a word upon his card before giving it to the servant,—"about Mr. Crawley." In a few minutes he was shown into the library, and had hardly time, while looking at the shelves, to remember what Mr. Crawley had said of his anger at the beautiful bindings, before an old man, very thin and very pale, shuffled into the room. He stooped a good deal, and his black clothes were very loose about his shrunken limbs. He was not decrepit, nor did he seem to be one who had advanced to extreme old age; but yet he shuffled rather than walked, hardly raising his feet from the ground. Mr. Toogood, as he came forward to meet him, thought that he had never seen a sweeter face. There was very much of melancholy in it, of that soft sadness of age which seems to acknowledge, and in some sort to regret, the waning oil of life; but the regret to be read in such faces has in it nothing of the bitterness of grief; there is no repining that the end has come, but simply a touch of sorrow that so much that is dear must be left behind.

Mr. Harding shook hands with his visitor, and invited him to sit down, and then seated himself, folding his hands together over his knees, and he said a few words in a very low voice as to the absence of his daughter and of the dean.

"I hope you will excuse my troubling you," said Mr. Toogood.

"It is no trouble at all,—if I could be of any use. I don't know whether it is proper, but may I ask whether you call as,—as,—as a friend of Mr. Crawley's?"

"Altogether as a friend, Mr. Harding."

"I'm glad of that; though of course I am well aware that the gentlemen engaged on the prosecution must do their duty. Still,—I don't know,—somehow I would rather not hear them speak of this poor gentleman before the trial."

"You know Mr. Crawley, then?"

"Very slightly,—very slightly indeed. He is a gentleman not much given to social habits, and has been but seldom here. But he is an old friend whom my son-in-law loves dearly."

"I'm glad to hear you say that, Mr. Harding. Perhaps before I go any further I ought to tell you that Mrs. Crawley and I are first-cousins."

"Oh, indeed. Then you are a friend."

"I never saw him in my life till a few days ago. He is very queer you know,—very queer indeed. I'm a lawyer, Mr. Harding, practising in London;—an attorney, that is." At each separate announcement Mr. Harding bowed, and when Toogood named his special branch of his profession Mr. Harding bowed lower than before, as though desirous of showing that he had great respect for attorneys. "And of course I'm anxious, if only out of respect for the family, that my wife's cousin should pull through this little difficulty, if possible."

"And for the sake of the poor man himself too, and for his wife, and his children;—and for the sake of the cloth."

"Exactly; taking it all together it's such a pity, you know. I think, Mr. Harding, he can hardly have intended to steal the money."

"I'm sure he did not."

"It's very hard to be sure of anybody, Mr. Harding;—very hard."

"I feel quite sure that he did not. He has been a most pious, hard-working clergyman. I cannot bring myself to think that he is guilty. What does the Latin proverb say? 'No one of a sudden becomes most base.'"

"But the temptation, Mr. Harding, was very strong. He was

awfully badgered about his debts. That butcher in Silverbridge was playing the mischief with him."

"All the butchers in Barsetshire could not make an honest man steal money, and I think that Mr. Crawley is an honest man. You'll excuse me for being a little hot about one of my own order."

"Why; he's my cousin,—or rather, my wife's. But the fact is, Mr. Harding, we must get hold of the dean as soon as possible; and I'm going to send a gentleman after him."

"To send a gentleman after him?" said Mr. Harding, almost in dismay.

"Yes; I think that will be best."

"I'm afraid he'll have to go a long way, Mr. Toogood."

"The dean, I'm told, is in Jerusalem."

"I'm afraid he is,—or on his journey there. He's to be there for the Easter week, and Sunday week will be Easter Sunday. But why should the gentleman want to go to Jerusalem after the dean?"

Then Mr. Toogood explained as well as he was able that the dean might have something to say on the subject which would serve Mr. Crawley's defence. "We shouldn't leave any stone unturned," said Mr. Toogood. "As far as I can judge, Crawley still thinks,—or half thinks,—that he got the cheque from your son-in-law." Mr. Harding shook his head sorrowfully. "I'm not saying he did, you know," continued Mr. Toogood. "I can't see myself how it is possible;—but still, we ought not to leave any stone unturned. And Mrs. Arabin,—can you tell me at all where we shall find her?"

"Has she anything to do with it, Mr. Toogood?"

"I can't quite say that she has, but it's just possible. As I said before, Mr. Harding, we mustn't leave a stone unturned. They're not expected here till the end of April?"

"About the 25th or 26th, I think."

"And the assizes are the 28th. The judges come into the city on that day. It will be too late to wait till then. We must have our defence ready you know. Can you say where my friend will find Mrs. Arabin?"

Mr. Harding began nursing his knee, patting it and being very tender to it, as he sat meditating with his head on one side,—meditating not so much as to the nature of his answer as to that of the question. Could it be necessary that any emissary from a lawyer's office should be sent after his daughter? He did not like the idea of his Eleanor being disturbed by questions as to a theft. Though she

had been twice married and had a son who was now nearly a man, still she was his Eleanor. But if it was necessary on Mr. Crawley's behalf, of course it must be done. "Her last address was at Paris, sir; but I think she has gone on to Florence. She has friends there, and she purposes to meet the dean at Venice on his return." Then Mr. Harding turned the table and wrote on a card his daughter's address.

"I suppose Mrs. Arabin must have heard of the affair?" said Mr. Toogood.

"She had not done so when she last wrote. I mentioned it to her the other day, before I knew that she had left Paris. If my letters and her sister's letters have been sent on to her, she must know it now."

Then Mr. Toogood got up to take his leave. "You will excuse me for troubling you, I hope, Mr. Harding."

"Oh, sir, pray do not mention that. It is no trouble, if one could only be of any service."

"One can always try to be of service. In these affairs so much is to be done by rummaging about, as I always call it. There have been many theatrical managers, you know, Mr. Harding, who have usually made up their pieces according to the dresses they have happened to have in their wardrobes."

"Have there, indeed, now? I never should have thought of that."

"And we lawyers have to do the same thing."

"Not with your clothes, Mr. Toogood?"

"Not exactly with our clothes;—but with our information."

"I do not quite understand you, Mr. Toogood."

"In preparing a defence we have to rummage about and get up what we can. If we can't find anything that suits us exactly, we are obliged to use what we do find as well as we can. I remember, when I was a young man, an ostler was to be tried for stealing some oats in the Borough; and he did steal them too, and sold them at a rag-shop regularly. The evidence against him was as plain as a pike-staff. All I could find out was that on a certain day a horse had trod on the fellow's foot. So we put it to the jury whether the man could walk as far as the rag-shop with a bag of oats when he was dead lame;—and we got him off."

"Did you though?" said Mr. Harding.

"Yes, we did."

"And he was guilty?"

"He had been at it regularly for months."

"Dear, dear, dear! Wouldn't it have been better to have had him punished for the fault,—gently; so as to warn him of the consequences of such doings?"

"Our business was to get him off,—and we got him off. It's my business to get my cousin's husband off, if I can, and we must do it, by hook or crook. It's a very difficult piece of work, because he won't let us employ a barrister. However, I shall have one in the court and say nothing to him about it at all. Good-by, Mr. Harding. As you say, it would be a thousand pities that a clergyman should be convicted of a theft;—and one so well connected too."

Mr. Harding, when he was left alone, began to turn the matter over in his mind and to reflect whether the thousand pities of which Mr. Toogood had spoken appertained to the conviction of the criminal, or the doing of the crime. "If he did steal the money I suppose he ought to be punished, let him be ever so much a clergyman," said Mr. Harding to himself. But yet,—how terrible it would be! Of clergymen convicted of fraud in London he had often heard; but nothing of the kind had ever disgraced the diocese to which he belonged since he had known it. He could not teach himself to hope that Mr. Crawley should be acquitted if Mr. Crawley were guilty;—but he could teach himself to believe that Mr. Crawley was innocent. Something of a doubt had crept across his mind as he talked to the lawyer. Mr. Toogood, though Mrs. Crawley was his cousin, seemed to believe that the money had been stolen; and Mr. Toogood as a lawyer ought to understand such matters better than an old secluded clergyman in Barchester. But, nevertheless, Mr. Toogood might be wrong; and Mr. Harding succeeded in satisfying himself at last that he could not be doing harm in thinking that Mr. Toogood was wrong. When he had made up his mind on this matter he sat down and wrote the following letter, which he addressed to his daughter at the post-office in Florence:—

"Dearest Nelly,— Deanery, March —, 186—.

"When I wrote on Tuesday I told you about poor Mr. Crawley, that he was the clergyman in Barsetshire of whose misfortune you read an account in Galignani's Messenger,—and I think Susan must have written about it also, because everybody here is talking of nothing else, and because, of course, we know how strong a regard the dean has for Mr. Crawley. But since that something has occurred which makes me write to you again,—at once. A gentleman has just been here, and has indeed only this moment left me, who tells me that he is an attorney

in London, and that he is nearly related to Mrs. Crawley. He seems to be a very good-natured man, and I daresay he understands his business as a lawyer. His name is Toogood, and he has come down as he says to get evidence to help the poor gentleman on his trial. I cannot understand how this should be necessary, because it seems to me that the evidence should all be wanted on the other side. I cannot for a moment suppose that a clergyman and a gentleman such as Mr. Crawley should have stolen money, and if he is innocent I cannot understand why all this trouble should be necessary to prevent a jury finding him guilty.

"Mr. Toogood came here because he wanted to see the dean,—and you also. He did not explain, as far as I can remember, why he wanted to see you; but he said it would be necessary, and that he was going to send off a messenger to find you first, and the dean afterwards. It has something to do with the money which was given to Mr. Crawley last year, and which, if I remember right, was your present. But of course Mr. Toogood could not have known anything about that. However, I gave him the address,—poste restante, Florence,—and I daresay that somebody will make you out before long, if you are still stopping at Florence. I did not like letting him go without telling you about it, as I thought that a lawyer's coming to you would startle you.

"The bairns are quite well, as I told you in my other letter, and Miss Jones says that little Elly is as good as gold. They are with me every morning and evening, and behave like darling angels, as they are. Posy is my own little jewel always. You may be quite sure I do nothing to spoil them.

"God bless you, dearest Nelly,

"Your most affectionate father,

"Septimus Harding."

After this he wrote another letter to his other daughter, Mrs. Grantly, telling her also of Mr. Toogood's visit; and then he spent the remainder of the day thinking over the gravity of the occurrence. How terrible would it be if a beneficed clergyman in the diocese should really be found guilty of theft by a jury from the city! And then he had always heard so high a character of this man from his son-in-law. No,—it was impossible to believe that Mr. Crawley had in truth stolen a cheque for twenty pounds!

Mr. Toogood could get no other information in Barchester, and went on to Silverbridge early in the afternoon. He was half disposed to go

by Hogglestock and look up his cousin, whom he had never seen, and his cousin's husband, upon whose business he was now intent; but on reflection he feared that he might do more harm than good. He had quite appreciated the fact that Mr. Crawley was not like other men. "The man's not above half-saved," he had said to his wife,—meaning thereby to insinuate that the poor clergyman was not in full possession of his wits. And, to tell the truth of Mr. Toogood, he was a little afraid of his relative. There was a something in Mr. Crawley's manner, in spite of his declared poverty, and in spite also of his extreme humility, which seemed to announce that he expected to be obeyed when he spoke on any point with authority. Mr. Toogood had not forgotten the tone in which Mr. Crawley had said to him, "Sir, this thing you cannot do." And he thought that, upon the whole, he had better not go to Hogglestock on this occasion.

When at Silverbridge, he began at once to "rummage about." His chief rummaging was to be done at Mr. Walker's table; but before dinner he had time to call upon the magistrate's clerk, and ask a few questions as to the proceedings at the sitting from which Mr. Crawley was committed. He found a very taciturn old man, who was nearly as difficult to deal with in any rummaging process as a porcupine. But, nevertheless, at last he reached a state of conversation which was not absolutely hostile. Mr. Toogood pleaded that he was the poor man's cousin,—pleaded that, as the family lawyer, he was naturally the poor man's protector at such a time as the present,—pleaded also that as the poor man was so very poor, no one else could come forward on his behalf,—and in this way somewhat softened the hard sharpness of the old porcupine's quills. But after all this, there was very little to be learned from the old porcupine. "There was not a magistrate on the bench," he said, "who had any doubt that the evidence was sufficient to justify them in sending the case to the assizes. They had all regretted,"—the porcupine said in his softest moment,—"that the gentleman had come there without a legal adviser." "Ah, that's been the mischief of it all!" said Mr. Toogood, dashing his hand against the porcupine's mahogany table. "But the facts were so strong, Mr. Toogood!" "Nobody there to soften 'em down, you know," said Mr. Toogood, shaking his head. Very little more than this was learned from the porcupine; and then Mr. Toogood went away, and prepared for Mr. Walker's dinner.

Mr. Walker had invited Dr. Tempest and Miss Anne Prettyman and Major Grantly to meet Mr. Toogood, and had explained, in a manner intended to be half earnest and half jocose, that though Mr.

Toogood was an attorney, like himself, and was at this moment engaged in a noble way on behalf of his cousin's husband, without any idea of receiving back even the money which he would be out of pocket; still he wasn't quite,—not quite, you know—"not quite so much of a gentleman as I am,"—Mr. Walker would have said, had he spoken out freely that which he insinuated. But he contented himself with the emphasis he put upon the "not quite," which expressed his meaning fully. And Mr. Walker was correct in his opinion of Mr. Toogood. As regards the two attorneys I will not venture to say that either of them was not a "perfect gentleman." A perfect gentleman is a thing which I cannot define. But undoubtedly Mr. Walker was a bigger man in his way than was Mr. Toogood in his, and did habitually consort in the county of Barsetshire with men of higher standing than those with whom Mr. Toogood associated in London.

It seemed to be understood that Mr. Crawley was to be the general subject of conversation, and no one attempted to talk about anything else. Indeed, at this time, very little else was talked about in that part of the county;—not only because of the interest naturally attaching to the question of the suspected guilt of a parish clergyman, but because much had become lately known of Mr. Crawley's character, and because it was known also that an internecine feud had arisen between him and the bishop. It had undoubtedly become the general opinion that Mr. Crawley had picked up and used a cheque which was not his own;—that he had, in fact, stolen it; but there was, in spite of that belief, a general wish that he might be acquitted and left in his living. And when the tidings of Mr. Crawley's victory over the bishop at the palace had become bruited about, popular sympathy went with the victor. The theft was, as it were, condoned, and people made excuses which were not always rational, but which were founded on the instincts of true humanity. And now the tidings of another stage in the battle, as fought against Mr. Crawley by the bishop, had gone forth through the county, and men had heard that the rural dean was to be instructed to make inquiries which should be preliminary to proceedings against Mr. Crawley in an ecclesiastical court. Dr. Tempest, who was now about to meet Mr. Toogood at Mr. Walker's, was the rural dean to whom Mr. Crawley would have to submit himself in any such inquiry; but Dr. Tempest had not as yet received from the bishop any official order on the subject.

"We are so delighted to think that you have taken up your cousin's case," said Mrs. Walker to Mr. Toogood, almost in a whisper.

"He is not just my cousin, himself," said Mr. Toogood, "but of

course it's all the same thing. And as to taking up his case, you see, my dear madam, he won't let me take it up."

"I thought you had. I thought you were down here about it?"

"Only on the sly, Mrs. Walker. He has such queer ideas that he will not allow a lawyer to be properly employed; and you can't conceive how hard that makes it. Do you know him, Mrs. Walker?"

"We know his daughter Grace." And then Mrs. Walker whispered something further, which we may presume to have been an intimation that the gentleman opposite,—Major Grantly,—was supposed by some people to be very fond of Miss Grace Crawley.

"Quite a child, isn't she?" said Toogood, whose own daughter, now about to be married, was three or four years older than Grace.

"She's beyond being a child, I think. Of course she is young."

"But I suppose this affair will knock all that on the head," said the lawyer.

"I do not know how that may be; but they do say he is very much attached to her. The major is a man of family, and of course it would be very disagreeable if Mr. Crawley were found guilty."

"Very disagreeable, indeed; but, upon my word, Mrs. Walker, I don't know what to say about it."

"You think it will go against him, Mr. Toogood?" Mr. Toogood shook his head, and on seeing this, Mrs. Walker sighed deeply.

"I can only say that I have heard nothing from the bishop as yet," said Dr. Tempest, after the ladies had left the room. "Of course, if he thinks well to order it, the inquiry must be made."

"But how long would it take?" asked Mr. Walker.

"Three months, I should think,—or perhaps more. Of course Crawley would do all that he could to delay us, and I am not at all sure that we should be in any very great hurry ourselves."

"Who are the 'we,' doctor?" said Mr. Walker.

"I cannot make such an inquiry by myself, you know. I suppose the bishop would ask me to select two or four other clergymen to act with me. That's the usual way of doing it. But you may be quite sure of this, Walker; the assizes will be over, and the jury have found their verdict long before we have settled our preliminaries."

"And what will be the good of your going on after that?"

"Only this good:—if the unfortunate man be convicted——"

"Which he won't," said Mr. Toogood, who thought it expedient to put on a bolder front in talking of the matter to the rural dean, than he had assumed in his whispered conversation with Mrs. Walker.

"I hope not, with all my heart," said the doctor. "But, perhaps, for the sake of the argument, the supposition may be allowed to pass."

"Certainly, sir," said Mr. Toogood. "For the sake of the argument, it may pass."

"If he be convicted, then, I suppose, there will be an end of the question. He would be sentenced for not less, I should say, than twelve months; and after that——"

"And would be as good a parson of Hogglestock when he came out of prison as when he went in," said Mr. Walker. "The conviction and judgment in a civil court would not touch his temporality."

"Certainly not," said Mr. Toogood.

"Of course not," said the doctor. "We all know that; and in the event of Mr. Crawley coming back to his parish it would be open to the bishop to raise the question as to his fitness for the duties."

"Why shouldn't he be as fit as any one else?" said Mr. Toogood.

"Simply because he would have been found to be a thief," said the doctor. "You must excuse me, Mr. Toogood, but it's only for the sake of the argument."

"I don't see what that has to do with it," said Mr. Toogood. "He would have undergone his penalty."

"It is preferable that a man who preaches from a pulpit should not have undergone such a penalty," said the doctor. "But in practice, under such circumstances,—which we none of us anticipate, Mr. Toogood,—the living should no doubt be vacated. Mr. Crawley would probably hardly wish to come back. The jury will do their work before we can do ours,—will do it on a much better base than any we can have; and, when they have done it, the thing ought to be finished. If the jury acquit him, the bishop cannot proceed any further. If he be found guilty I think that the resignation of the living must follow."

"It is all spite, then, on the bishop's part?" said the major.

"Not at all," said the doctor. "The poor man is weak; that is all. He is driven to persecute because he cannot escape persecution himself. But it may really be a question whether his present proceeding is not right. If I were bishop I should wait till the trial was over; that is all."

From this and from much more that was said during the evening on the same subject Mr. Toogood gradually learned the position which Mr. Crawley and the question of Mr. Crawley's guilt really held

in the county, and he returned to town resolved to go on with the case.

"I'll have a barrister down express, and I'll defend him in his own teeth," he said to his wife. "There'll be a scene in court, I daresay, and the man will call upon his own counsel to hold his tongue and shut up his brief; and, as far as I can see, counsel in such a case would have no alternative. But there would come an explanation,—how Crawley was too honourable to employ a man whom he could not pay, and there would be a romance, and it would all go down with the jury. One wants sympathy in such a case as that—not evidence."

"And how much will it cost, Tom?" said Maria, dolefully.

"Only a trifle. We won't think of that yet. There's John Eames is going all the way to Jerusalem, out of his pocket."

"But Johnny hasn't got twelve children, Tom."

"One doesn't have a cousin in trouble every day," said Toogood. "And then you see there's something very pretty in the case. It's quite a pleasure getting it up."

CHAPTER XLIII.

MR. CROSBIE GOES INTO THE CITY.

"I've known the City now for more than ten years, Mr. Crosbie, and I never knew money to be so tight as it is at this moment. The best commercial bills going can't be done under nine, and any other kind of paper can't so much as get itself looked at." Thus spoke Mr. Musselboro. He was seated in Dobbs Broughton's arm-chair in Dobbs Broughton's room in Hook Court, on the hind legs of which he was balancing himself comfortably; and he was communicating his experience in City matters to our old friend, Adolphus Crosbie,—of whom we may surmise that he would not have been there, at that moment, in Hook Court, if things had been going well with him. It was now past eleven o'clock, and he should have been at his office at the West End. His position in his office was no doubt high enough to place him beyond the reach of any special inquiry as to such absences; but it is generally felt that when the Crosbies of the West End have calls into the City about noon, things in the world are not going well with them. The man who goes into the City to look for money is generally one who does not know where to get money when he wants it. Mr. Musselboro on this occasion kept his hat on his head, and there was something in the way in which he balanced his chair which was in itself an offence to Mr. Crosbie's personal dignity. It was hardly as yet two months since Mr. Dobbs Broughton had assured him in that very room that there need not be the slightest anxiety about his bill. Of course it could be renewed,—the commission being duly paid. As Mr. Dobbs Broughton explained on that occasion, that was his business. There was nothing he liked so much as renewing bills for such customers as Mr. Crosbie; and he was very candid at that meeting, explaining how he did this branch of his business, raising money on his own credit at four or five per cent., and lending it on his own judgment at eight or nine. Mr. Crosbie did not feel himself then called upon to exclaim that what he was called upon to pay was about twelve, perfectly understanding the comfort and grace of euphony; but he had turned it over in his mind, considering whether twelve per cent. was not more than he ought to be mulcted for the accommodation he wanted. Now, at the moment, he would have been glad to get it from Mr. Musselboro, without further words, for twenty.

Things had much changed with Adolphus Crosbie when he was driven to make morning visits to such a one as Mr. Musselboro with the view of having a bill renewed for two hundred and fifty pounds. In his early life he had always had the merit of being a careful man as to money. In some other respects he had gone astray very foolishly,—as has been partly explained in our earlier chapters; but up to the date of his marriage with Lady Alexandrina De Courcy he had never had dealings in Hook Court or in any such locality. Money troubles had then come upon him. Lady Alexandrina, being the daughter of a countess, had high ideas; and when, very shortly after his marriage, he had submitted to a separation from his noble wife, he had found himself and his income to be tied up inextricably in the hands of one Mr. Mortimer Gazebee, a lawyer who had married one of his wife's sisters. It was not that Mr. Gazebee was dishonest; nor did Crosbie suspect him of dishonesty; but the lawyer was so wedded to the interest of the noble family with which he was connected, that he worked for them all as an inferior spider might be supposed to work, which, from the infirmity of its nature, was compelled by its instincts to be catching flies always for superior spiders. Mr. Mortimer Gazebee had in this way entangled Mr. Crosbie in his web on behalf of those noble spiders, the De Courcys, and our poor friend, in his endeavour to fight his way through the web, had fallen into the hands of the Hook Court firm of Mrs. Van Siever, Dobbs Broughton, and Musselboro.

"Mr. Broughton told me when I was last here," said Crosbie, "that there would be no difficulty about it."

"And it was renewed then; wasn't it?"

"Of course it was,—for two months. But he was speaking of a continuation of renewal."

"I'm afraid we can't do it, Mr. Crosbie. I'm afraid we can't, indeed. Money is so awful tight."

"Of course I must pay what you choose to charge me."

"It isn't that, Mr. Crosbie. The bill is out for collection, and must be collected. In times like these we must draw ourselves in a little, you know. Two hundred and fifty pounds isn't a great deal of money, you will say; but every little helps, you know; and, besides, of course we go upon a system. Business is business, and must not be made pleasure of. I should have had a great deal of pleasure in doing this for you, but it can't be done in the way of business."

"When will Broughton be here?"

"He may be in at any time;—I can't say when. I suppose he's down at the court now."

"What court?"

"Capel Court."

"I suppose I can see him there?" said Crosbie.

"If you catch him you can see him, of course. But what good will that do you, Mr. Crosbie? I tell you that we can't do it for you. If Broughton was here this moment it couldn't make the slightest difference."

Now Mr. Crosbie had an idea that Mr. Musselboro, though he sat in Dobbs Broughton's seat and kept on his hat, and balanced his chair on two legs, was in truth nothing more than a clerk. He did not quite understand the manner in which the affairs of the establishment were worked, though he had been informed that Mrs. Van Siever was one of the partners. That Dobbs Broughton was the managing man, who really did the business, he was convinced; and he did not therefore like to be answered peremptorily by such a one as Musselboro. "I should wish to see Mr. Broughton," he said.

"You can call again,—or you can go down to the court if you like it. But you may take this as an answer from me that the bill can't be renewed by us." At this moment the door of the room was opened, and Dobbs Broughton himself came into it. His face was not at all pleasant, and any one might have seen with half an eye that the money-market was a great deal tighter than he liked it to be. "Here is Mr. Crosbie here,—about that bill," said Musselboro.

"Mr. Crosbie must take up his bill; that's all," said Dobbs Broughton.

"But it doesn't suit me to take it up," said Crosbie.

"Then you must take it up without suiting you," said Dobbs Broughton.

It might have been seen, I said, with half an eye, that Mr. Broughton did not like the state of the money-market; and it might also be seen with the other half that he had been endeavouring to mitigate the bitterness of his dislike by alcoholic aid. Musselboro at once perceived that his patron and partner was half drunk, and Crosbie was aware that he had been drinking. But, nevertheless, it was necessary that something more should be said. The bill would be due to-morrow,—was payable at Crosbie's bankers; and, as Mr. Crosbie too well knew, there were no funds there for the purpose. And there were other purposes, very needful, for which Mr. Crosbie's funds were at the present moment unfortunately by no means sufficient. He stood for a few moments thinking what he would do;—whether he would leave the drunken man and his office and let the bill take its chance, or whether

he would make one more effort for an arrangement. He did not for a moment believe that Broughton himself was subject to any pecuniary difficulty. Broughton lived in a big house, as rich men live, and had a name for commercial success. It never occurred to Crosbie that it was a matter of great moment to Dobbs Broughton himself that the bill should be taken up. Crosbie still thought that Musselboro was his special enemy, and that Broughton had joined Musselboro in his hostility simply because he was too drunk to know better. "You might, at any rate, answer me civilly, Mr. Broughton," he said.

"I know nothing about civility with things as they are at present," said Broughton. "Civil by——! There's nothing so civil as paying money when you owe it. Musselboro, reach me down the decanter and some glasses. Perhaps Mr. Crosbie will wet his whistle."

"He don't want any wine,—nor you either," said Musselboro.

"What's up now?" said Broughton, staggering across the room towards a cupboard, in which it was his custom to keep a provision of that comfort which he needed at the present moment. "I suppose I may stand a glass of wine to a fellow in my own room, if I like it.'

"I will take no wine, thank you," said Crosbie.

"Then you can do the other thing. When I ask a gentleman to take a glass of wine, there is no compulsion. But about the bill there is compulsion. Do you understand that? You may drink, or let it alone; but pay you must. Why, Mussy, what d'ye think?—there's Carter, Ricketts and Carter;—I'm blessed if Carter just now didn't beg for two months, as though two months would be all the world to him, and that for a trumpery five hundred pounds. I never saw money like it is now; never." To this appeal, Musselboro made no reply, not caring, perhaps, at the present moment to sustain his partner. He still balanced himself in his chair, and still kept his hat on his head. Even Mr. Crosbie began to perceive that Mr. Musselboro's genius was in the ascendant in Hook Court.

"I can hardly believe," said Crosbie, "that things can be so bad that I cannot have a bill for two hundred and fifty pounds renewed when I am willing to pay for the accommodation. I have not done much in the way of bills, but I never had one dishonoured yet."

"Don't let this be the first," said Dobbs Broughton.

"Not if I can prevent it," said Crosbie. "But, to tell you the truth, Mr. Broughton, my bill will be dishonoured unless I can have it renewed. If it does not suit you to do it, I suppose you can recommend me to some one who can make it convenient."

"Why don't you go to your bankers?" said Musselboro.

"I never did ask my bankers for anything of the kind."

"Then you should try what your credit with them is worth," said Broughton. "It isn't worth much here, as you can perceive. Ha, ha, ha!"

Crosbie, when he heard this, became very angry; and Musselboro, perceiving this, got out of his chair, so that he might be in readiness to prevent any violence, if violence were attempted. "It really is no good you're staying here," he said. "You see that Broughton has been drinking. There's no knowing what he may say or do."

"You be blowed," said Broughton, who had taken the arm-chair as soon as Musselboro had left it.

"But you may believe me in the way of business," continued Musselboro, "when I tell you that it really does not suit us to renew the bill. We're pressed ourselves, and we must press others."

"And who will do it for me?" said Crosbie, almost in despair.

"There are Burton and Bangles there, the wine-merchants down in the yard; perhaps they may accommodate you. It's all in their line; but I'm told they charge uncommon dear."

"I don't know Messrs. Burton and Bangles," said Crosbie.

"That needn't stand in your way. You tell them where you come from, and they'll make inquiry. If they think it's about right, they'll give you the money; and if they don't, they won't."

Mr. Crosbie then left the office without exchanging another word with Dobbs Broughton, and went down into Hook Court. As he descended the stairs he turned over in his mind the propriety of going to Messrs. Burton and Bangles with the view of relieving himself from his present difficulty. He knew that it was ruinous. Dealings even with such men as Dobbs Broughton and Musselboro, whom he presumed to be milder in their greed than Burton and Bangles, were, all of them, steps on the road to ruin. But what was he to do? If his bill were dishonoured, the fact would certainly become known at his office, and he might even ultimately be arrested. In the doorway at the bottom of the stairs he stood for some moments, looking over at Burton and Bangles', and he did not at all like the aspect of the establishment. Inside the office he could see a man standing with a cigar in his mouth, very resplendent with a new hat,—with a hat remarkable for the bold upward curve of its rim, and this man was copiously decorated with a chain and seals hanging about widely over his waistcoat. He was leaning with his back against the counter, and was talking to some one on the other side of it. There was something in the man's look and manner that was utterly repulsive to Crosbie. He was more vulgar to

the eye even than Musselboro, and his voice, which Crosbie could hear as he stood in the other doorway, was almost as detestable as that of Dobbs Broughton in his drunkenness. Crosbie did not doubt that this was either Burton or Bangles, and that the man standing inside was either Bangles or Burton. He could not bring himself to accost these men and tell them of his necessities, and propose to them that they should relieve him. In spite of what Musselboro had just said to him, he could not believe it possible that he should succeed, were he to do so without some introduction. So he left Hook Court and went out into the lane, hearing as he went the loud voice of the man with the turned-up hat and the chain.

But what was he to do? At the outset of his pecuniary troubles, when he first found it necessary to litigate some question with the De Courcy people, and withstand the web which Mortimer Gazebee wove so assiduously, his own attorney had introduced him to Dobbs Broughton, and the assistance which he had needed had come to him, at any rate, without trouble. He did not especially like Mr. Broughton; and when Mr. Broughton first invited him to come and eat a little bit of dinner, he had told himself with painful remorse that in his early days he had been accustomed to eat his little bits of dinner with people of a different kind. But there had been nothing really painful in this. Since his marriage with a daughter of the De Courcys,—by which marriage he had intended to climb to the highest pinnacle of social eating and drinking,—he had gradually found himself to be falling in the scale of such matters, and could bring himself to dine with a Dobbs Broughton without any violent pain. But now he had fallen so low that Dobbs Broughton had insulted him, and he was in such distress that he did not know where to turn for ten pounds. Mr. Gazebee had beaten him at litigation, and his own lawyer had advised him that it would be foolish to try the matter further. In his marriage with the noble daughter of the De Courcys he had allowed the framers of the De Courcy settlement to tie him up in such a way that now, even when chance had done so much for him in freeing him from his wife, he was still bound to the De Courcy faction. Money had been paid away,—on his behalf, as alleged by Mr. Gazebee,—like running water; money for furniture, money for the lease of a house, money when he had been separated from his wife, money while she was living abroad. It had seemed to him that he had been made to pay for the entire support of the female moiety of the De Courcy family which had settled itself at Baden-Baden, from the day, and in some respects from before the day, on which his wife had joined that moiety. He had done all in his power to struggle

against these payments, but every such struggle had only cost him more money. Mr. Gazebee had written to him the civilest notes; but every note seemed to cost him money,—every word of each note seemed to find its way into some bill. His wife had died and her body had been brought back, with all the pomp befitting the body of an earl's daughter, that it might be laid with the old De Courcy dust,—at his expense. The embalming of her dear remains had cost a wondrous sum, and was a terrible blow upon him. All these items were showered upon him by Mr. Gazebee with the most courteously worded demands for settlement as soon as convenient. And then, when he applied that Lady Alexandrina's small fortune should be made over to him,—according to a certain agreement under which he had made over all his possessions to his wife, should she have survived him,—Mr. Gazebee expressed a mild opinion that he was wrong in his law, and blandly recommended an amicable lawsuit. The amicable lawsuit was carried on. His own lawyer seemed to throw him over. Mr. Gazebee was successful in everything. No money came to him. Money was demanded from him on old scores and on new scores,—and all that he received to console him for what he had lost was a mourning ring with his wife's hair,—for which, with sundry other mourning rings, he had to pay,—and an introduction to Mr. Dobbs Broughton. To Mr. Dobbs Broughton he owed five hundred pounds; and as regarded a bill for the one-half of that sum which was due to-morrow, Mr. Dobbs Broughton had refused to grant him renewal for a single month!

I know no more uncomfortable walking than that which falls to the lot of men who go into the City to look for money, and who find none. Of all the lost steps trodden by men, surely the steps lost after that fashion are the most melancholy. It is not only that they are so vain, but that they are accompanied by so killing a sense of shame! To wait about in dingy rooms, which look on to bare walls, and are approached through some Hook Court; or to keep appointments at a low coffee-house, to which trystings the money-lender will not trouble himself to come unless it pleases him; to be civil, almost suppliant, to a cunning knave whom the borrower loathes; to be refused thrice, and then cheated with his eyes open on the fourth attempt; to submit himself to vulgarity of the foulest kind, and to have to seem to like it; to be badgered, reviled, and at last accused of want of honesty by the most fraudulent of mankind; and at the same time to be clearly conscious of the ruin that is coming,—this is the fate of him who goes into the city to find money, not knowing where it is to be found!

Crosbie went along the lane into Lombard Street, and then he stood

still for a moment to think. Though he knew a good deal of affairs in general, he did not quite know what would happen to him if his bill should be dishonoured. That somebody would bring it to him noted, and require him instantly to put his hand into his pocket and bring out the amount of the bill, plus the amount of certain expenses, he thought that he did know. And he knew that were he in trade he would become a bankrupt; and he was well aware that such an occurrence would prove him to be insolvent. But he did not know what his creditors would immediately have the power of doing. That the fact of the bill having been dishonoured would reach the Board under which he served,—and, therefore, also the fact that he had had recourse to such bill transactions,—this alone was enough to fill him with dismay. In early life he had carried his head so high, he had been so much more than a mere Government clerk, that the idea of the coming disgrace almost killed him. Would it not be well that he should put an end to himself, and thus escape? What was there in the world now for which it was worth his while to live? Lily, whom he had once gained, and by that gain had placed himself high in all hopes of happiness and riches,—whom he had then thrown away from him, and who had again seemed to be almost within his reach,—Lily had so refused him that he knew not how to approach her with a further prayer. And, had she not refused him, how could he have told her of his load of debt? As he stood at the corner where the lane runs into Lombard Street, he came for a while to think almost more of Lily than of his rejected bill. Then, as he thought of both his misfortunes together, he asked himself whether a pistol would not conveniently put an end to them together.

At that moment a loud, harsh voice greeted his ear. "Hallo, Crosbie, what brings you so far east? One does not often see you in the City." It was the voice of Sir Raffle Buffle, which in former days had been very odious to Crosbie's ears;—for Sir Raffle Buffle had once been the presiding genius of the office to which Crosbie still belonged.

"No, indeed, not very often," said Crosbie, smiling. Who can tell, who has not felt it, the pain that goes to the forcing of such smiles? But Sir Raffle was not an acutely observant person, and did not see that anything was wrong.

"I suppose you're doing a little business?" said Sir Raffle. "If a man has kept a trifle of money by him, this certainly is the time for turning it. You have always been wide awake about such things."

"No, indeed," said Crosbie. If he could only make up his mind that he would shoot himself, would it not be a pleasant thing to inflict

some condign punishment on this odious man before he left the world? But Crosbie knew that he was not going to shoot himself, and he knew also that he had no power of inflicting condign punishment on Sir Raffle Buffle. He could only hate the man, and curse him inwardly.

"Ah, ha!" said Sir Raffle. "You wouldn't be here unless you knew where a good thing is to be picked up. But I must be off. I'm on the Rocky Mountain Canal Company Directory. I'm not above taking my two guineas a day. Good-by, my boy. Remember me to old Optimist." And so Sir Raffle passed on, leaving Crosbie still standing at the corner of the lane.

What was he to do? This interruption had at least seemed to drive Lily from his mind, and to send his ideas back to the consideration of his pecuniary difficulties. He thought of his own bank, a West-End establishment at which he was personally known to many of the clerks, and where he had been heretofore treated with great consideration. But of late his balances had been very low, and more than once he had been reminded that he had overdrawn his account. He knew well that the distinguished firm of Bounce, Bounce, and Bounce would not cash a bill for him or lend him money without security. He did not even dare to ask them to do so.

On a sudden he jumped into a cab, and was driven back to his office. A thought had come upon him. He would throw himself upon the kindness of a friend there. Hitherto he had contrived to hold his head so high above the clerks below him, so high before the Commissioners who were above him, that none there suspected him to be a man in difficulty. It not seldom happens that a man's character stands too high for his interest,—so high that it cannot be maintained, and so high that any fall will be dangerous. And so it was with Crosbie and his character at the General Committee Office. The man to whom he was now thinking of applying as his friend, was a certain Mr. Butterwell, who had been his predecessor in the secretary's chair, and who now filled the less onerous but more dignified position of a Commissioner. Mr. Crosbie had somewhat despised Mr. Butterwell, and had of late years not been averse to showing that he did so. He had snubbed Mr. Butterwell, and Mr. Butterwell, driven to his wits' ends, had tried a fall or two with him. In all these struggles Crosbie had had the best of it, and Butterwell had gone to the wall. Nevertheless, for the sake of official decency, and from certain wise remembrances of the sources of official comfort and official discomfort, Mr. Butterwell had always maintained a show of outward friendship with the secretary. They smiled and were gracious, called each other Butterwell and Crosbie, and

abstained from all cat-and-dog absurdities. Nevertheless, it was the frequently expressed opinion of every clerk in the office that Mr. Butterwell hated Mr. Crosbie like poison. This was the man to whom Crosbie suddenly made up his mind that he would have recourse.

As he was driven back to his office he resolved that he would make a plunge at once at the difficulty. He knew that Butterwell was fairly rich, and he knew also that he was good-natured,—with that sort of sleepy good-nature which is not active for philanthropic purposes, but which dislikes to incur the pain of refusing. And then Mr. Butterwell was nervous, and if the thing was managed well, he might be cheated out of an assent, before time had been given him in which to pluck up courage for refusing. But Crosbie doubted his own courage also,—fearing that if he gave himself time for hesitation he would hesitate, and that, hesitating, he would feel the terrible disgrace of the thing and not do it. So, without going to his own desk, or ridding himself of his hat, he went at once to Butterwell's room. When he opened the door, he found Mr. Butterwell alone, reading The Times. "Butterwell," said he, beginning to speak before he had even closed the door, "I have come to you in great distress. I wonder whether you can help me; I want you to lend me five hundred pounds? It must be for not less than three months."

Mr. Butterwell dropped the paper from his hands, and stared at the secretary over his spectacles.

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THE

LAST CHRONICLE

OF

BARSET.

BY

ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

WITH THIRTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE H. THOMAS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	How did he get it?	1
II.	By Heavens he had better not	12
III.	The Archdeacon's Threat	20
IV.	The Clergyman's House at Hogglestock	25
V.	What the World thought about it	33
VI.	Grace Crawley	39
VII.	Miss Prettyman's Private Room	49
VIII.	Mr. Crawley is taken to Silverbridge	59
IX.	Grace Crawley goes to Allington	73
X.	Dinner at Framley Court	82
XI.	The Bishop sends his Inhibition	88
XII.	Mr. Crawley seeks for Sympathy	97
XIII.	The Bishop's Angel	105
XIV.	Major Grantly consults a friend	115
XV.	Up in London	121
XVI.	Down at Allington	132
XVII.	Mr. Crawley is summoned to Barchester	145
XVIII.	The Bishop of Barchester is Crushed	154
XIX.	Where did it come from?	164
XX.	What Mr. Walker thought about it	169
XXI.	Mr. Robarts on his Embassy	176
XXII.	Major Grantly at Home	184
XXIII.	Miss Lily Dale's Resolution	193
XXIV.	Mrs. Dobbs Broughton's Dinner-party	203
XXV.	Miss Madalina Demolines	217
XXVI.	The Picture	226
XXVII.	A Hero at Home	233
XXVIII.	Showing how Major Grantly took a Walk	241
XXIX.	Miss Lily Dale's Logic	248
XXX.	Showing what Major Grantly did after his Walk	253
XXXI.	Showing how Major Grantly returned to Guestwick	258
XXXII.	Mr. Toogood	265
XXXIII.	The Plumstead Foxes	281
XXXIV.	Mrs. Proudie sends for her Lawyer	289

CHAP.		PAGE
XXXV.	Lily Dale writes Two Words in her Book	297
XXXVI.	Grace Crawley returns Home	313
XXXVII.	Hook Court	318
XXXVIII.	Jael	327
XXXIX.	A new Flirtation	337
XL.	Mr. Toogood's Ideas about Society	344
XLI.	Grace Crawley at Home	351
XLII.	Mr. Toogood travels professionally	361
XLIII.	Mr. Crosbie goes into the City	375

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Mr. Crawley before the Magistrates	*Frontispiece*	
Mr. and Mrs. Crawley	*to face page*	6
"I love you as though you were my own," said the Schoolmistress	,,	47
"A Convicted Thief," repeated Mrs. Proudie	,,	90
"Speak out, Dan"	,,	104
Grace Crawley is introduced to Squire Dale	,,	140
Farmer Mangle and Mr. Crawley	,,	152
"She's more like Eleanor than any one else"	,,	186
"I am very glad to have the opportunity of shaking hands with you"	,,	207
"What do you think of it, Mrs. Broughton?"	,,	228
Squire Dale and Major Grantly	,,	247
"Never mind Mr. Henry"	,,	285
Lily wishes that they might swear to be Brother and Sister	,,	304
She read the beginning—"Dearest Grace"	,,	314
"Mamma, I've got something to tell you"	,,	358
Mr. Toogood and the old Waiter	,,	363

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